

READER'S DIGEST
October 1981

Is This America a Soviet Spy?

IN THE ANNALS of Soviet defections to the West, the bizarre or perplexing as that of Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko. In years, his reputation has alternately plummeted and soared. The intelligence corps debated whether he was a true defector or a double agent. In the end, acceptance was the verdict, and Nosenko is today a consultant.

However, new and secret FBI findings—revealed time—declare that another Soviet, code-named Fedora, the FBI believed was spying for the United States, was an agent under the control of Moscow. These findings raise questions about American intelligence operations—arrangements and the legitimacy of other defectors, including Yuri Nosenko. Is

Adapted From "SHADRIN: THE SPY WHO NEVER CAME BACK"

HENRY HURT

IT BEGINS in 1962 when KGB officer Yuri Nosenko arrived in Geneva, Switzerland, with a Soviet delegation to a disarmament conference. During that trip, he made a secret approach to the CIA and announced that he wished to work for the West. He did not want to defect, however; instead, he preferred to meet with the CIA whenever his KGB duties took him outside Russia. Then Nosenko offered information that suggested he had valuable knowledge in many areas of CIA interest, including KGB recruitment of an American as a Soviet spy.

After this initial contact, Nosenko returned to the conference. The CIA officer flew to the United States convinced that the CIA had secured the prize of all prizes in intelligence: an "agent in place"—a spy who would work for America in the very heart of the Soviet secret service.

The officer's enthusiasm disappeared shortly after he reached CIA headquarters. There he was told a secret that only a handful of CIA officers then knew. Another KGB officer, a man named Anatoli M. Golitsin, had defected to the United States six months earlier and stated that the KGB had penetrated the CIA at a high level. He had also warned that the Soviets would send out false defectors to deceive and confuse Western intelligence and to divert any investigation that would lead to the KGB spy in the CIA. (Indeed, a number of highly placed Soviet intelligence officers did appear, among them a United Nations diplomat whose code-name, Fedora, would become inextricably linked with Nosenko.)

The thrust of Nosenko's information was that there was no Soviet penetration of the CIA. His leads about KGB recruitment of an American spy pointed to the U.S. military.

prevailed, he would never be accepted as a true defector.

Nothing was heard from Nosenko for 19 months. Then, in January of 1964, two months after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, he appeared in Geneva again. He stated that he wanted to defect to the United States—and he offered an irresistible temptation. He said that he had been in charge of the KGB file on Lee Harvey Oswald, the man who had assassinated President Kennedy.